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What new commandment should be added to the existing ten?

Response by Rabbi Peter Schweitzer

When given the opportunity to propose a relevant Eleventh Commandment, I immediately thought of one:

(1) Be compassionate. Have empathy. Be forgiving. Feel what the other person is feeling. How she might be hurting. Or he might feel powerless. Listen first. Talk respectfully.

And then, in quick succession, I thought of nine more.

(2) Take responsibility for your actions. Don't deny, pass the buck, or blame others.

(3) Do not shoulda coulda woulda. Second-guessing becomes unproductive when it ends up in a cycle of blame of others or ourselves.

(4) Don't jump to conclusions. Get information. Be willing to hear other points of view.

(5) Don't catastrophize. Anxiety is normal, but when we ratchet it up to a crisis we undermine our ability to cope.

(6) Speak out for justice. Be angry about good causes. Turn that anger into action.

(7) Know your limits. Know when you can't do any more. Know when you need help.

(8) Be wise. Be curious. Seek out learning from all quarters. Question inherited truths.

(9) Take time out to smell the roses. Smile and laugh. Make others smile and laugh too.

(10) Have chutzpah to break from the past. Change and innovation are part of our tradition. Create your own set of Ten Commandments!